



## **KEN BURKE**

CLERK OF THE CIRCUIT COURT - PINELLAS COUNTY, FLORIDA

Clerk of the County Court • Recorder of Deeds • Clerk and Accountant of the Board of County Commissioners  
Custodian of County Funds • County Auditor • Clerk of the Water and Navigation Control Authority

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**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:**

### ***Clerk's Office earns award from Department of Defense***

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – November 30, 2007** – Pinellas County, Florida – Ken Burke, Clerk of the Court, was presented the 2007 Family Advocacy Community Collaboration Award for his actions to help stop domestic violence by Major John Navarro of the MacDill Air Force Base's U.S. Department of Defense's (DOD) Family Advocacy Program (FAP). The DOD's FAP has only given out two such awards worldwide since its inception in 1979, announced Major John Navarro.

The award was presented in recognition of the effort between the Clerk's Office and the FAP to identify military personnel involved in domestic violence matters to ensure these families have access to the FAP's specialized services, which deal with the affects of war.

"We were aware of criminal matters and working with families in those cases – we were blind to the idea that people seek relief from domestic abuse situations in civil court, said Major Navarro. This creates lost opportunities for intervention services including funding for relocation, counseling and continued medical insurance."

Once the Clerk's intake sections identify the respondent in any military branch, both the parties are assisted through the program in many positive ways, according to Burke.

"We initially had some concerns about whether this program would be intrusive to the individual, said Burke. "Major Navarro showed us it would be beneficial, so we came to a formal understanding."

Navarro recognized Burke's exceptional efforts when presenting the award in the Civil Court Records Department. "Ken sees the value in the program and recognizes that wellness is key to the fighting combat readiness of our troops, said Navarro. "This story is really about the compassionate and courageous decision of the Clerk's Office to help support troops have healthy families."

Funded by Congress in 1979 to combat family violence and child abuse – within the last 3 years the program was given the responsibility of dating violence issues to include help for non-marital partners.

For more information contact the Clerk's Office at 727-464-3341 or visit the website at <http://www.pinellasclerk.org>.

Captions for attached photos:

1. Marie Wilson, Sally Martin, Theresa Jewell and Manager Patti Hager pose with the award, which will be kept in the Clearwater Civil Court Records Department's Office.
2. Ken Burke, Clerk of Court, graciously accepts the award on behalf of the Clerk's Office Civil Court Records Department.
3. Clerk Ken Burke and Major John Navarro with the 2007 Family Advocacy, Domestic Violence Community Collaboration Award.

**ABOUT THE CLERK'S OFFICE:** The Clerk of the Circuit Court was established as a public trustee by the Florida Constitution in 1838. The Clerk of the Circuit Court serves as the Clerk of Courts, the Clerk of the Board of County Commissioners, Auditor, Recorder and Custodian of all County Funds.